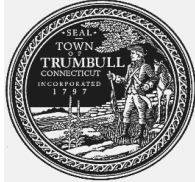


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EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 30, 2010

Chairman Chad Ciocci called the Education Committee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All present joined in a moment of silence and the pledge of allegiance.

Present: Chairman Chad Ciocci, Vice Chairman Martha Jankovic-Mark, Roberta Bellows Ann Marie Evangelista, and Mary Beth Thornton (arrived at 6:33 p.m.)

Absent: Daniel Helfrich.

Also Present: Mr. Al Barbarotta of AFB Construction Management, Mr. Jeff Jenkins Town Council Representative Member of the Trumbull High School Building Committee, Town Council Chairman Carl A. Massaro, Jr. and Councilman Waizenegger.

A. DISCUSSION ITEM: Use and operation of the pool at Hillcrest Middle School

RESOLUTION TC23-48: BE IT RESOLVED, That the Education Committee of the Town Council is hereby authorized to conduct a review of the use and operation of the pool at Hillcrest Middle School and shall submit a written report of its review, findings and recommendations within ninety (90) days to the Clerk of the Council (For Discussion Purposes Only)

Mr. Barbarotta reported that the separation and security issues at the Hillcrest Pool have been resolved and all work has been completed to date as a tentative fix to keep the pool operational for all. He outlined what would need to be done at a minimum. The work described would keep the pool operational for a 10-year period. AFB consulted with Brock Pools.

The recommended repairs are as follows:

- Draining the pool
- Resealing the tiles
- Gutter replacement

- Watertight the pool
 - Filter Room review
 - Total replacement of the ventilation system
 - Ceiling spray finish – scrape the ceiling and refinish
 - Lighting on the ceiling (#1 safety issue)
 - Locker rooms showers (many of the showers are non-functioning)
- The total estimate for the work listed above is \$1,443,063.50.

The above list does not address the location of the pool, the pitch/slant of the pool and the ceiling height. The recommended work represents repairs that need to be done to keep the current Hillcrest open for another 10 years. The repair work does not qualify for state reimbursement, but an engineer and architect would still be necessary for the development and execution of the specifications.

Mr. Barbarotta explained to the committee the co-generation system and how it is efficient for a pool. The generator creates heat; the same heat is reused and re-circulated to heat the pool. After personnel, utilities are the biggest cost involved. The initial cost would pay back its cost over a 5-7 year period of use. The cost of the co-generation is not included in the above mentioned estimate of \$1,443,063.50. The cost is estimated at approximately \$200,000 bringing the total estimate to \$1,643,063.50. The mechanicals would still be underneath the pool, at times there is water in the mechanical room. The tank had leaked but has since been patched at a cost of \$7,500. Resealing the tile will also address the issue of water in the mechanical room. The work outlined at this meeting is a minimum, and recognizes that the pool is in a shared building, a school; the security issues have been addressed. In response to a question from Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Barbarotta stated that he is confident the list of proposed recommendations addresses the major elements that need to be done to keep the pool operational for 10 years. To replace the existing pool as it is, it would cost approximately \$5-\$7 million. To address all the issues at hand with the Hillcrest Pool it would be necessary to implode the pool, and the pool would still be attached to a school, not the ideal situation.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Barbarotta stated that the new HVAC system would have a life of 20 years. It can not be said that all the repairs would be for 20 years, 10 years from now more repairs will be necessary.

In response to a question from Ms. Bellows, Mr. Barbarotta confirmed that all items on the list would go out to bid, he did not expect the bids to come in much less, the estimators are very good and generally estimate the costs very close to the actual costs that come in. Some unknowns are built into the estimates as well. The bathrooms have been remedied as best as they could have been, everyone is satisfied, and safety issues have been addressed and resolved as well.

On behalf of the Education Committee, Ms. Thornton extended her gratitude to AFB for his work and effort.

1. RESOLUTION TC23-89: Moved by Ms. Mark, seconded by Ms Thornton.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Trumbull High School Building Committee is hereby authorized to seek competitive bids for the construction of the Trumbull High School Natatorium as previously designed and specified. The purpose of this resolution is provide more accurate information about the cost of building the Natatorium in light of recent favorable bids and other cost savings, but the final decision about whether to build the Natatorium will be made by the Council at a later date.

Mr. Jenkins requested that the Education Committee consider allowing the Trumbull High School Building Committee to go out to bid on the pool. The overall THS Renovation project has come in under estimate. Hillcrest Pool has reached the end of its useful life. The town is in the process of considering spending \$1.4 million dollars in repairs for an additional 10 years of operation. If the cost of the new pool was approximately \$5 million dollars to build and it qualified for \$750,000 in reimbursement from the State minus the amount the town is considering for repairs of the Hillcrest Pool that would bring the overall additional cost of \$2,750,000 and the result would be a new pool with a 20-year useful life. There are four people who take care of the pool, there is one gentleman in particular who is an expert at resolving issues with that particular pool, it is problematic if he is not available for any reason to keep the pool operational. The THS Building Committee needs to address the team rooms and the concession stand. The concession stand is classified as dry storage, that building will not meet code as it is currently. It is necessary to make a long term decision now, the only way we will know is to let the building committee to get bids so we can identify real costs and to be able to make an intelligent decision. The current pool was built in 1967; the pool is 43 years old. Mr. Jenkins requested that the town council allow the building committee to bid the pool. The economy is poor right now, but that same economy allows for very competitive bids, resulting in dramatically lower bids and better bonding rates. The drawings are all done and ready to be bid, the town has been spent \$250,000 to date on those drawings.

The Chair stated he is not in favor of building a pool and never has been and that the minimum work proposed would not be reduced even further. Mr. Barbarotta stated that the alternates were approved and that \$800,000 had been added to the THS renovation, bringing the THS renovation project to \$5 million under the estimated cost.

Ms. Bellows stated that she appreciates Mr. Jenkins request, but having been through the recent budget where education, police, and the public works budget were reduced she could not be in favor of building a pool. The \$5 million dollars that the THS renovation has come in under budget should go back to the taxpayers. Ms. Bellows stated that when the town does build a pool it should be a free standing facility. Getting bids leads people to believe a pool may be built and that may not be the case.

Ms. Evangelista agreed with Ms. Bellows, citing that there is an additional expense to fill in the pool.

Ms. Mark spoke stated that she believed that the space at Hillcrest would not need to be dealt with right away; it could be closed and dealt with at a later date.

Ms. Thornton stated that the Hillcrest Pool is at the end of its life and that the town will have to put tax dollars into repairs on it and the result will be that the pool only needs even more repairs. It is a bad decision to put more money into the pool. If the town had a new pool it would create revenue for the town and will become an asset for the town, just as the golf course has become.

Chairman Ciocci stated that there other towns in Fairfield County that do not have multimillion dollar amenities but still have very high real estate values. If the pool could be a self sustaining enterprise fund he could reconsider his view against the pool, but pointed out that they have not been presented with any of those numbers.

Ms. Waizenegger stated that a pool would come under the control of the BoE, there would still be the issue of responsibility, a community pool is a good idea, but the pool proposed is not a community pool, and would want everyone to know exactly what it is that they are asking to go out to bid on, it is pool under the BoE control, which could only be used for certain things and under only certain capacities.

Mr. Barbarotta stated the charge to the school building committee was to build a natatorium and to stay with in the constraints of a \$5 million dollar budget, the rules of the usage of the pool are determined by the state, and the reimbursement amount in question is \$750,000. If anything other than making the use exclusive to school during the day, if an enterprise fund is the choice and the \$750,000 was going to be made up by going the enterprise fund way it would not have to be presented to the state, it would then be a Trumbull community pool and could do whatever the town wanted. Exclusive use during school hours is the only way it would be reimbursable. Mr. Barbarotta stated that if the pool were to be part of

the school building committee they will need to seek reimbursement, it is part of their charge.

Mr. Jenkins cautioned the Education Committee that if the \$1.4 million in repairs necessary for the Hillcrest pool to keep it operational were reduced, that would only cost even greater repairs in 3 years.

Ms. Mark stated that if the pool were not put out to bid, that would mean no real numbers would be identified and the ability to make an informed/responsible decision would be forfeited. She does not want to lose the pool and the town will lose the pool if it is not maintained. Who is responsible for the pool is not the biggest issue. Ms. Mark spoke against spending \$1.4 million in repairs on the current pool but did speak in favor of going out to bid and being able to make an informed decision as town council member.

Mr. Tom Collins of the Pisces Swim Organization was present. Mr. Collins stated that the Hillcrest Pool does generate some revenue now, the Recreation Department does charge for some of the current activities and for some use of the pool. A tremendous amount of fees could be generated at the pool, could the fees off set bonding interest, he is not sure of that, but Mr. Collins is sure that fees could and would offset the operating costs. If the town feels that there should not be a pool the \$1.4 million should not be spent on the repairs. The pool is closed April through October. The town needs an aquatics director, one person needs to be in charge of the pool. The aquatics director would put an aquatics program together where the pool would utilized at all hours of the day, a good system would be in place and a detailed schedule, which would result in bringing in revenue. Cheshire's demographics are very close to Trumbull's and could be used as a model for our town. Mr. Collins asked all present at the meeting to visit the Cheshire website at www.cheshirect.org. If you were to substitute Trumbull wherever Cheshire is named it could be an exact model for Trumbull's new aquatic's program and fee schedule. This would allow Trumbull to forego the \$750,000 in reimbursement. The Cheshire pool generated \$470,000 in revenue annually. Mr. Collins believes Trumbull could generate \$200,000 in revenue if an aquatics director were in charge. It would cost the town approximately \$15-20 million for a community pool; Trumbull will never be able to build such a community pool. The \$750,000 in reimbursement would be the equivalent of \$30,000 additional interest per year on the bond; this could be made up in fees and revenue easily. Mr. Collins spoke to the bond rates now and stated he is not sure if you will ever be able to bond out at these rates again in the near future. Five years from the town will be spending a lot more on this pool. If Trumbull does not feel it needs a town, it should be closed up and no more money should be put into it. There is no question how valuable swimming and that pool is to Trumbull. Mr. Collins would like a pool that is efficient and will raise revenue for

the town. If the pool is not going to be used with an aquatics director and the pool is not going to be open on Saturdays and Sundays April through October, he would not be in favor of spending the \$1.4 million. If you were to look at the Cheshire website as a model for Trumbull, a family would purchase a pool pass for a year at a cost of \$225.00. Swim meets typically generate revenue, as an example they pay \$1,700 per lane for 3 hours at Wesleyan, it would cost him \$6,000. Each team pays 42 dollars per swimmer and there are ten teams that is \$42,000 just for the meet being held at your pool, with \$10-15,000 in expenses, the team profits by approximately \$20,000. The pool can bring in huge revenue. Mr. Collins stated that the town could forego the \$750,000 in revenue; that is only \$30,000 in interest annually. Mr. Collins stated he would respect the committee's decision but asked that they not be short-sighted.

In response to a question from Mr. Massaro, Mr. Jenkins stated the number used for the cost of a pool is a number by example, not a real number, the team rooms and bathrooms would not be part of this. If the pool were built with the team rooms and bathrooms the cost estimate is approximately \$6.5 million. There is not a design without the team rooms and bathrooms. A redesign would be necessary. Mr. Barbarotta reiterated that the concession stand and code issues still need to be addressed and looked at. Mr. Barbarotta explained that because it was an unknown as to what would happen with the pool and the team rooms and the bathrooms, the concession stand was classified as storage. The school has said that they absolutely need the concession stand; the building committee is now looking at the concession stand with bathrooms.

Lanny McQue of the PTA Council was present. Ms. McQue spoke in favor of allowing the building committee to go out to bid on the pool; it would not be prudent to renovate a 40 year old pool. It would be possible to just lock the doors at the existing pool and not to upgrade that space at this juncture, the space would allow for flexibility of use down the road. Ms. McQue stated it is imperative to separate the pool from the school; there is no program for the pool at the school anymore.

Mr. Jenkins stated that the possible revenue spoken of at this meeting by Mr. Collins was more than he had ever expected. Mr. Jenkins requested that Mr. Collins be able to speak to the full council. Mr. Massaro stated that most of what had been presented at this meeting has been discussed before, and would consider the request.

VOTE: Motion failed 2-3 (Against: Bellows, Ciocci, and Evangelista).

There being no further business to discuss the Education Committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastroni
Council Clerk